

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A charger comprising:

an electrode having a plurality of protrusions and
giving a predetermined potential to an image carrier;

5 a cleaning mechanism contacting the electrode, and
removing deposits electrostatically deposited on the
electrode; and

a moving mechanism which moves the cleaning
mechanism along the electrode.

10 2. The charger according to claim 1, wherein
the cleaning mechanism includes a cleaning sheet
whose shape is changed by a provided predetermined
stress.

15 3. The charger according to claim 2, wherein
the cleaning sheet is a film-like elastic sheet
made of polyester, polyimide, polyamide or the like.

4. The charger according to claim 2, wherein
the cleaning sheet has a thickness of 10 to
100 μm .

20 5. The charger according to claim 2, wherein
the cleaning sheet has a thickness of 25 to 75 μm .

6. The charger according to claim 2, wherein
an encroaching amount of the cleaning sheet and
the electrode is 0.1 to 1.5 mm.

25 7. The charger according to claim 2, wherein
an abrasive is applied to a surface of the
cleaning sheet.

8. The charger according to claim 2,
further comprising a holding plate capable of
retaining the deposits removed from the electrode by
the cleaning mechanism.

5 9. A charger comprising:

an electrode having a plurality of protrusions and
which is a sheet-shaped electric conductor having a
first plane including a straight line in an axial
direction of an image carrier;

10 a cleaning mechanism which includes a sheet
portion having a second plane disposed vertically to
the first plane of the electrode, and a holding member
to movably hold the sheet portion so that the second
plane of the sheet portion vertically contacts the
15 first plane of the electrode.

10. The charger according to claim 9, wherein
the second plane of the sheet portion is vertical
to the first plane, and deforms within a range of -90°
to 90° with respect to a virtual plane which includes
20 a virtual line vertical to an axis of the image
carrier.

11. An image forming apparatus comprising:

an image carrier which holds a latent image and a
developer image;

25 a charger including an electrode, a cleaning
mechanism and a moving mechanism,

the electrode having a plurality of protrusions

and giving a predetermined potential to an image carrier,

the cleaning mechanism contacting the electrode and removing deposits electrostatically deposited on the electrode,

the moving mechanism moving the cleaning mechanism along the electrode;

a development device which supplies a developer to the image carrier to which the predetermined potential is supplied by the charger; and

a transfer device which transfers the developer image formed on the image carrier onto an output medium.

12. The image forming apparatus according to claim 11, wherein

the moving mechanism comprises a driving means, and operates the driving means when the number of output media becomes a predetermined number or more.

13. The image forming apparatus according to claim 12, wherein

the driving means is not operated while an image is being formed.

14. The image forming apparatus according to claim 11, wherein

the moving mechanism comprises the driving means, and operates the driving means with an instruction from a control panel.

15. The image forming apparatus according to claim 11, wherein

the cleaning mechanism includes a cleaning sheet whose shape is changed by a provided predetermined stress.

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16. The image forming apparatus according to claim 12, wherein

the cleaning sheet is a film-like elastic sheet made of polyester, polyimide, polyamide or the like.

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17. The image forming apparatus according to claim 12, wherein

an abrasive is applied to a surface of the cleaning sheet.

18. The image forming apparatus according to claim 12,

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further comprising a holding plate capable of retaining the deposits removed from the electrode by the cleaning mechanism.